

**MINUTES
OF
THE OZARK FOOTHILLS TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MAY 9, 2013
OZARK FOOTHILLS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

ELLINGTON CITY HALL, ELLINGTON, MISSOURI

I. Call to Order

Chairman Brain Polk called the meeting to order at 6:23 p.m.

II. Open for Public Discussion

No public discussion ensued.

III. Adoption of February 28, 2013 Minutes

Minutes from the February 28, 2013 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting were reviewed. The minutes were adopted with a motion by Wayne Gibbs, Carter County, and second by Mike Gossett, Carter County.

IV. Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Reports

Jay Lancaster, MoDOT Southeast District, handed out maps of the Southeast District showing project locations for the new draft 2014-2018 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The draft was released during the first week of May and is open for public comment through the remainder of the month. The STIP will become official July 1st, after the Missouri Transportation and Highway Commission reviews comments in June. The draft STIP can be found on MoDOT's website, along with a public comment option.

Mr. Lancaster stated that the Ozark Foothills region has 19 projects in the draft STIP and he proceeded to give a brief overview of each project. Starting in Butler County, bridge improvements will be made on MO 142 over Hart Ditch. Bridge improvements will also be made on MO 158. Pavement improvements from Route 53 to the Arkansas State line will be made on MO 51, as well as from Route B to Route 53. MoDOT is also teaming with the City of Poplar Bluff in a cost participation project to make intersection improvements at Oak Grove Road and Business 67 in Poplar Bluff. Another intersection improvement will be made at Township line Road and Route 60 near Poplar Bluff. US Highway 67 will see pavement improvements from south of Route 60 East to 6.5 miles north of Route 60 East. Pavement improvements will be made on Route WW from the Union Pacific Railroad Bridge to Route 53 in Poplar Bluff. Finally, Route PP in Butler County will see three projects. Those include intersection improvements 1.5 miles west of Poplar Bluff at County Road 441 (Township Line Road), bridge improvements over Pike Creek, and pavement resurfacing over Pike Creek Bridge.

In Carter County, pavement improvements will be made on MO 21 from Route 60 to Route 160. This project includes more than 22 miles of roadway. Route M will be widened for paved shoulders; its curves flattened, and bridge replaced from Route 60 to County Road M-127. This project was the TAC's number one regional priority last year. Mike Gossett asked if there was a possibility this project could be removed from the STIP since it is in draft form. Both Jay Lancaster and Chris Rutledge, MoDOT Southeast District, stated it was unlikely, as this project has had the TAC's support for a number of years.

In Reynolds County, pavement improvements will be made on MO 21 from Route 106 to Route 34. Pavement improvements will also be made from the Reynolds County line to the City of Piedmont on MO 34.

In Ripley County, roadway improvements will be made on US 160 from Route JJ in Ripley County to Route 67 in Butler County. This project will include resurfacing along with the installation of alternating passing lanes. Andrew Murphy, Transportation Planning Coordinator, asked if the intersection readjustments at Route JJ and Route BB on US 160 were included in this project. Dave Wyman, MoDOT Southeast District, stated that they were. The TAC had designated the improvement of those intersections as a priority last year. After reviewing possible scenarios, MoDOT decided the most efficient answer was to relocate the intersections to the top of the hills to allow for better line of sight. Chairman Polk stated the three lanes on Highway 34 in Wayne County have worked well once people became accustomed to the additional lane. Chris Rutledge inquired if Chairman Polk thought more signage might have made the transition easier. Chairman Polk felt there was adequate signage; time was required for people to adjust.

In Wayne County, pavement improvements will be made on MO 143 from the bridge over Big Creek to Route 34. On US Highway 67, the bridge over Cedar Creek will be replaced. Dave Wyman stated that this is the last "condition three" bridge in the Southeast District. Finally, bridge improvements over McGee Creek will take place on Route Z.

Chris Rutledge mentioned the on-going improvements that MoDOT is making citing the work on Highway 72 in Reynolds County as an example. He also pointed out the large number of bridges being improved. Lastly, Mr. Rutledge felt that the work on MO Highway 21, which covers multiple counties, demonstrates the importance of the north-south corridor. He expects a continued emphasis to be placed on that corridor.

Elquin Auala, MoDOT Southeast District, thanked the TAC for their role in the planning process. She stated she had recently spoken to nearly everyone in the room due to numerous ongoing projects in the region with her role as the Local Public Agency liaison at MoDOT.

Dave Wyman reminded everyone that as summer approaches there will be more work zones along Missouri highways and to please slow down through those zones. He also mentioned that the MoDOT app for smartphones shows all work zones in the state and the MoDOT website has a comment section pertaining to work zones.

Mr. Wyman briefly gave a variety of updates. He mentioned that MoDOT has a new Director in Dave Nichols. Mr. Nichols was the chief engineer before accepting this role and has worked at MoDOT for 29 years. He next mentioned the *On the Move* van that will be out all summer across the state. MoDOT will be attending county fairs and public events in all 114 counties in the state seeking feedback and guidance for its twenty-year plan. Project updates were also provided. On US 67 South, the bridge deck on the new MO 158 overpass was just completed. The construction at Oak Grove Road in Poplar Bluff is going well and work will be completed this summer while school is out of session. Finally, a \$3 million contract to pave US 160 was recently let.

Next, Mr. Wyman provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding MoDOT's *On the Move* campaign and explained its goal is to define what MoDOT will do over the next twenty years. The Southeast District has 577,000 people spread across 25 counties. Missouri has the seventh largest highway system in the United States and 80% of all travel conducted in the state is on state highways. Missouri also has 213 bridges larger than 1,000 feet. The state has 14 public ports, which play a large role in Missouri's transportation system. Many goods produced in Missouri are shipped to their destination via the Mississippi River. Not only goods produced in Missouri, but also oil that is fracked in North and South Dakotas is transported to Hayti, Missouri by train and then loaded onto barges for shipment to oil refineries in New Orleans. Fifteen barges can transport as much as 220 train cars and 1,050 tractor-trailers. Missouri also has the second and third largest railroad ports in the country in Kansas City and St. Louis. Along with the railroads, Missouri has 125 airports, but it does not have an international airport. Finally, 70 million transit trips are taken in the state annually.

MoDOT has an 85% customer satisfaction rating, the 4th lowest administrative cost per mile in the nation, and has completed more than 4,000 projects in the past 10 years. Many of these projects have been under budget and the most were completed on time or ahead of schedule. Safety is important and is a focus for MoDOT. The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety has done a lot of work around the state and roads are now safer, with more shoulders and rumble strips.

Transportation funding has not kept up with costs. Cars are more fuel-efficient and less revenue is created with fuel taxes. While the fuel tax has remained the same, the price of concrete has increased 199%, asphalt 176%, and the price of steel nearly 200%.

For every \$1 that is invested in transportation, \$4 is generated via economic development. Mr. Wyman reminded everyone that transportation plays a role in everyone's daily life and encouraged everyone in attendance to fill out the *On the Move* surveys that were provided. He also mentioned the campaign website at www.missourionthemove.org.

Steve Halter, Butler County, asked about Highway 67 safety issues in areas with large drop offs next to the roadway. Dave Wyman stated that he knew of a couple of examples that people have mentioned to him, one near Madison County, and one near Silva. He explained that from an engineering perspective these areas were recoverable and safe. From a perception point of view, the areas look worse than they actually are. Mr. Halter stated that he would like to know how much adding cables or rails at these locations would cost. Andrew Murphy stated that he has spoken with a number of people that have also brought this issue to his attention in Wayne

County and the issue has been mentioned in the transportation surveys he has conducted at community events. Chairman Polk read a comment regarding the issue from the Merchant Showcase survey.

V. Report from Transportation Planning Coordinator

Andrew Murphy provided updates on a variety of projects in the area. The Poplar Bluff Industrial Park Bypass opened in August 2012. All aspects of the project are complete except for the City of Poplar Bluff's installation of streetlights. The City of Poplar Bluff hopes to begin installation soon.

The Doniphan Sidewalk Project cannot progress until the city obtains easements. There has been a delay in getting homeowners to sign the easements.

Bids for the Doniphan Quick Creek Trail Project had bids opened on April 12 and the construction contract was awarded to C&M Contracting. The project is now waiting on the City to provide the Notice to Proceed.

Bids for the Carter County Paving Project were opened on April 25. The apparent low bidder was Pace Construction.

Bids were opened for the Carter County Courthouse Sidewalk Project on April 25. The apparent low bidder was RL Persons Construction. The engineer is currently putting together the necessary information to receive bid concurrence from MoDOT. The project will start mid-June, as a large arts and crafts show is to take place on the courthouse grounds Memorial Day weekend.

The City of Piedmont's Sidewalk Improvement Project has about 90% of the sidewalks completed and is ready to begin bridge installation at two locations. There is an approximate 4-5 week waiting period prior to delivery of the prefabricated bridges.

The Old Greenville Trail Project has been delayed due to a large amount of rain. The contractor was advised to remove their equipment from the site due to expected flooding. Still, all timber has been cleared and all but two pipes have been installed. Work has also begun on flattening two hills.

Mr. Murphy next spoke about a couple of projects that were not included on the Agenda. He mentioned that over the last couple of months the Ozark Foothills RPC has been brought in to assist the City of Doniphan with two Department of Natural Resource grants involving the Quick Creek Park and ball field next to the Doniphan High School. The park project has a Recreational Trails Program grant to build a trail around the park and a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to construct a softball field. Mr. Murphy stated that the projects were behind schedule and over the past couple of months, extensions have been granted, an engineering firm selected,

budget and scope changes submitted and approved, land appraisals reevaluated, and timelines for accomplishments created.

Mr. Murphy also spoke regarding the Poplar Bluff Historic Train Depot Restoration Corporation's work in raising match funds for Butler County's recently awarded Transportation Alternatives grant. He reminded everyone Butler County received a \$252,000 grant for the project and the corporation has been in the process of raising \$63,000 with a deadline by June 1. As of the beginning of May, the non-profit needed to raise another \$18,000. One way the regional planning commission was able to help was to facilitate the placement of the project on CauseMomentem.org. Mr. Murphy explained that the planning commission is a member of the Community Foundation of the Ozarks and that through that membership the commission was able to place the project on the website. He next explained that the website raises funds through crowd funding and the concept is taken from private for-profit websites such as Kickstarter.com. The thought process is to raise money from non-traditional donors, as well as donors from outside the community. So far, 20% of the \$2,500 goal placed on the website has been raised.

VI. Old Business

Andrew Murphy asked the committee to approve the Regional Transportation Plan, which was presented for review at the previous meeting. Mr. Murphy explained that there have been no revisions made since the previous meeting and that updates to the new plan include the most recent information available from MoDOT's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, the full 2012 TAC project prioritization listing, updated U.S. Census information, new maps, and tables, and the newly completed regional sidewalk assessment.

The plan was adopted with a motion by Bill Kirkpatrick, Wayne County, and second by Joe Loyd, Reynolds County.

VII. New Business

Andrew Murphy reviewed survey results from the Home, Garden, and Leisure Show at the Black River Coliseum in March, as well as survey results from the Merchant Showcase conducted at Three Rivers College in April. Attendees filled out survey's answering what they felt were the most important transportation needs in the region. Identified needs included to continue the four lane of US 67 to Arkansas, a redesign of PP Highway and Township Line in Poplar Bluff, and increasing public transit in the region including multiple comments regarding a public bus system. Mr. Murphy mentioned that this has been a growing comment at these events and more and more people are mentioning a need for public transportation and improved sidewalks.

Next, Mr. Murphy provided copies of a summary of Missouri Senate Joint Resolution 16 to the TAC. This resolution is designed to place a 1% statewide sales tax on the ballot to help fund transportation improvements within the state. The handout included the exact wording that is currently under consideration of the Missouri Senate and House for placement on the ballot.

Wayne Gibbs inquired if MoDOT felt the tax would pass if it were placed before the voters. Dave Wyman stated he felt it would pass through both the House and Senate, but with the economy and hard times for many, this decision will be very personal, and therefore, difficult to answer the question.

Lastly, copies of the draft form of *A Proposal for Missouri's Transportation Future* were provided to the TAC. Andrew Murphy explained that this document was released in January, but had just come across his desk. The document is six pages describing Missouri's transportation funding dilemma and how additional revenue would be spent should a 1% sales tax or other funding enhancement occur.

VIII. General Discussion

Dave Wyman informed the TAC that Michelle Teel, MoDOT's Multi-Modal Director, had accepted an invitation extended by Andrew Murphy to speak at the next TAC meeting in August. Mr. Wyman explained that Ms. Teel is a Butler County native and looks forward to engaging with the committee.

Andrew Murphy announced the next TAC meeting would take place in Poplar Bluff, MO at the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission. The meeting is scheduled for August 8, 2013.

IX. Adjournment

Bill Kirkpatrick moved to adjourn. Chairman Brian Polk adjourned the meeting at 7:42 pm.

TAC ATTENDANCE ROSTER

May 9, 2013

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Mr. Andrew Murphy | Ozark Foothills RPC |
| Mr. Steve Halter | Butler County (Alternate) |
| Mr. Mike Gossett | Carter County |
| Mr. Wayne Gibbs | Carter County |
| Mr. David Reynolds | Carter County |
| Mr. Joe Loyd | Reynolds County |
| Mr. Ben Pickett | Reynolds County |
| Mr. Eddie Williams | Reynolds County (Alternate) |
| Mr. William Kennon | Ripley County |
| Mr. Brian Polk | Wayne County |
| Mr. Bill Kirkpatrick | Wayne County |
| Ms. Angela Smith | Wayne County |
| Mr. David Wyman | MoDOT Southeast |
| Mr. Jay Lancaster | MoDOT Southeast |
| Mr. Chris Rutledge | MoDOT Southeast |
| Ms. Elquin Auala | MoDOT Southeast |
| Ms. Becky Gibbs | Public Attendee |
| Mr. Steven Branson | Public Attendee |

THOSE NOT IN ATTENDANCE

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Mr. Ed Strenfel | Butler County |
| Mr. Don Anderson | Butler County |
| Mr. Jeff Darnell | Butler County |
| Mr. Frank Carroll | Butler County |
| Mr. Bill Robison | Butler County |
| Mr. John Bailiff | Carter County |
| Mr. David Bowman | Carter County |
| Mr. Darrell Dement | Reynolds County |
| Mr. Doug Warren | Reynolds County |
| Ms. Renee Horn | Reynolds County |
| Mr. Jerry Halley | Ripley County |
| Mr. David Johnson | Ripley County |
| Mr. Steve Burke | Ripley County |
| Mr. Nick Ederer | Ripley County |
| Mr. Harold Ellinghouse | Wayne County |
| Mr. Don Scowden | Wayne County |